

GENERAL BOARD: STANDING ORDERS**1. Responsibilities of the General Board**

The General Board have adopted these Standing Orders to regulate their business and to promote its efficient and proper consideration. In doing so, members of the General Board accept a general responsibility to comply with the specific provisions of the Standing Orders and to secure the conduct of the business as expeditiously as is consistent with its proper consideration.

The responsibilities and powers of the Board are set out in Statute C, I, and in those Ordinances that refer to the Board. In any apparent conflict between these Standing Orders and the provisions of the Statutes and Ordinances, the latter shall prevail.

2. Membership

The categories of membership of the Board and the tenure of membership are set out in the same Statute, as are the arrangements in the event that the Vice-Chancellor, as Chairman of the General Board, is unable to attend a particular meeting.

Any member unable to attend a particular meeting should inform the Secretary in advance of the meeting. Members unable to attend for these items may, if they wish, inform the Secretary of their views of particular items of business in advance: the Secretary shall report those views at the meeting. Appointment, attendance and retirement of members of the Board are governed by the General Regulations for Boards, Syndicates, etc. in Statutes and Ordinances. In particular regulation 4, as follows:

If a member of such a Board, Syndicate, or other body is absent from three successive meetings of which due notice has been given, that member's seat shall become vacant at the end of the third of such meetings, unless at that or an earlier meeting the cause of the absence has been declared sufficient by the body of which the person concerned is a member.

3. Secretary

In accordance with Statute C, 1, 11, the Academic Secretary has been designated by the Council as Secretary of the General Board. The Secretary shall advise the Chairman on the business to be included on the agenda for each meeting, shall circulate proper notice of meetings and relevant papers not later than 6 days before the date of the meeting, and shall advise the Chairman and the Board on the proper exercise of their responsibilities within the framework of Statutes and Ordinances, agreed University policy and of relevant decisions previously taken by the Board. The Secretary shall keep the Minutes of each meeting unless the General Board shall direct otherwise for business in which the Secretary has declared a personal interest or for which the Secretary and others in attendance have been asked to leave.

Business which the Chairman deems straightforward or which does not require a decision by the Board may be dealt with by means of circulars issued between meetings. Unless any member requests, via the Secretary and within 7 days of the date of issue of the circular, that a matter be referred to a meeting of the Board or to a Committee, the decisions recommended in the circular are approved.

7. Observers and advisers

The following may also be in attendance: the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Registrary, the Deputy Academic Secretary, the Draftsman and others as agreed by the Chairman on the advice of the Secretary.

The Board, normally acting through the Chairman, may invite any person to attend any meeting to observe the business or to advise the Board on a specific item. An observer shall have no right to speak, except at the request of the Chairman, or to vote. An adviser shall have the right to speak subject to the Chairman's normal direction but shall have no right to vote.

8. Quorum

In accordance with Statute C, 9 no business shall be transacted by the Board unless at least five members are present. In the absence of a quorum the business outstanding shall be carried forward to the next ordinary meeting of the Board.

9. Collectivity and responsibilities and the signing of Reports

The Chairman is responsible for the conduct of meetings and for ensuring that the business is considered efficiently, expeditiously and properly. Members who speak should address the Chairman and accept his/her direction, keeping silence when the Chairman speaks. Members should at all times behave towards the Chairman and each other with proper respect and consideration. Members are not limited in the number of times on which they may speak on any item but are expected to speak only as often as they judge necessary for the proper conduct of the business and for the proper fulfilment of the responsibilities of the Board. If the Chairman considers that any member is unreasonably impeding the efficient, expeditious and proper running of a meeting of the Board, the Chairman may require that member to withdraw from the meeting. Should the member continue to refuse to observe the authority of the Chairman in this matter it shall be open to the Chairman and the other members in their absolute discretion to determine how the consideration of that item and/or the meeting as a whole shall proceed.

In reaching decisions, members, under the direction of the Chairman, shall endeavour so far as possible to achieve consensus. In any vote each member present shall have a single vote and voting shall be decided by a simple majority of the members present and voting except when specific majorities are required by Statute or Ordinance.

10. Protocol on signing and non-signature of Reports

The Chairman is responsible for seeking agreement for signing Reports. All Members are expected to sign a Report (and may do so electronically) unless they state their dissent. A note of dissent from Member(s) advising on reasons for not signing a Report is required and may be published together with the Report.

In their consideration of business, the Board shall take due heed of their statement of Intention (p.117 *Statutes and Ordinances*) which reads as follows:

In considering any proposal for enacting or amending an Ordinance in pursuance of their powers under Statute C, I, 2, the General Board will consult other University bodies as appropriate. If in the course of such consultation the Board become aware that the matter is likely to prove controversial, they will also consult the Regent House by initiating a Grace enabling the Regent House to express an opinion on the proposed change. The Board will give consideration to remarks made at any Discussion of such matters and to the outcome of any vote on them.

11. Meetings of the Board

The Board shall meet at least twice termly and at times agreed by them in the preceding year, in accordance with Statute C, and at such other times as may be determined necessary by the Chairman. If the Chairman determines that an extraordinary meeting of the Board is required, at least 7 days notice for such a meeting shall be given. If, in the Chairman's opinion, there is insufficient business to justify an ordinary meeting, that meeting may be cancelled by the Chairman with 7 days' notice.

12. Adjournment

The business of normal meetings beginning at 2.00 pm shall normally be adjourned at 4.30 pm and outstanding business carried forward to a future meeting.

13. Minutes of the Board

The Minutes of the Board shall be drafted by the Secretary for formal approval at the following meeting. In advance of that meeting, members of the Board will be asked to indicate whether they approve the version of the Minutes (which shall be the unconfirmed Minutes, less any confidential minutes and the Reserved Business Minutes) for the website.

14. Responsibility for actions arising from the Board

The Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring that the relevant bodies or individuals are informed of necessary actions arising from the decisions taken at meetings of the Board.

15. Confidentiality

Unless decided otherwise by the Board in relation to a specific item and subject to the provisions of Statute K, 20, the business and papers shall be confidential to the members, the officers and authorised observers and advisers. Members may however make discreet use of their knowledge of Board business. Access to the Minutes and papers of the Board shall require the permission of the Secretary except for members or former members in relation to the period of their

membership and, under the provisions of Statute A,VII, 6, for members of the Board of Scrutiny.

16. The Board's Committees

Statute K, 9 (b) provides that unless otherwise expressly provided by the Statutes, a body such as the Board may appoint committees for any such general or special business as in the opinion of the body may be better regulated or managed by means of a committee, and may delegate to any committee so appointed, or to any University officer, with or without restrictions or conditions, the exercise of any functions proper to the body, provided (*inter alia*) that:

- i. such delegation shall not relieve the Board of responsibility for the matter delegated;
- ii. members of the Board shall have the right of access to all papers considered by such committees or persons;
- iii. such delegation may be withdrawn (either generally or in respect of a specific matter) at any time.

17. Members serving on other bodies

Members of the Board who are appointed by the Board as their representatives on other bodies shall, at meetings of those bodies, report the Board's view on any item discussed, whether or not the member(s) concerned agree with that view. Similarly, as and when business from those bodies is considered by the Board, members shall report the view of the body concerned, whether or not the member(s) agree with that view.

18. Interpretation

The interpretation of these Standing Orders shall be the responsibility of the Chairman, whose decision shall be final. Review of these Standing Orders shall be undertaken annually.

19. Suspension

Subject to the provisions of the Statutes and Ordinances, these standing orders may be suspended by motion duly proposed and seconded and approved by a majority of two-thirds of the members present.

End.

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